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THE STAR BRAND

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I DUNNO...
LOOKS LIKE IT MIGHT BE A BIT BIG FOR YOU, DUCK.
PITT

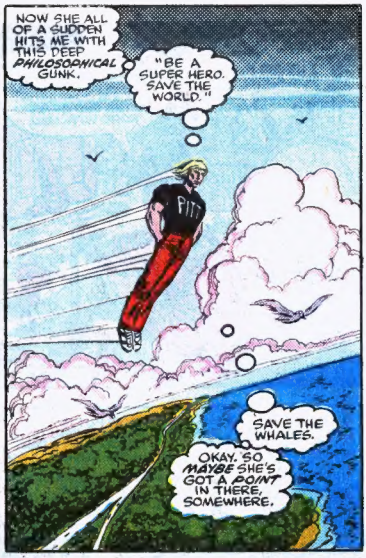
HUH?
IT'S NOT FOR ME, KENNY, IT'S...
OH!
YOU'RE JUST MAKING A JOKE!
I GET IT!
QUACK!
TRY IT ON WHY DON'CHA?

LOOK, DUCK...
I KNOW YOU MEAN WELL AN' ALL, BUT... I'M JUST NOT READY TO GO PUBLIC...
I DON'T THINK I EVER WILL BE.

BUT, KENNY, IT ONLY MAKES SENSE, D'N'T YA SEE?
ALL THEM WEIRD POWERS YOU GOT... JUST LIKE A COMIC BOOK SUPER HERO!
ONLY YOU'RE FOR REAL, KENNY!
PITT

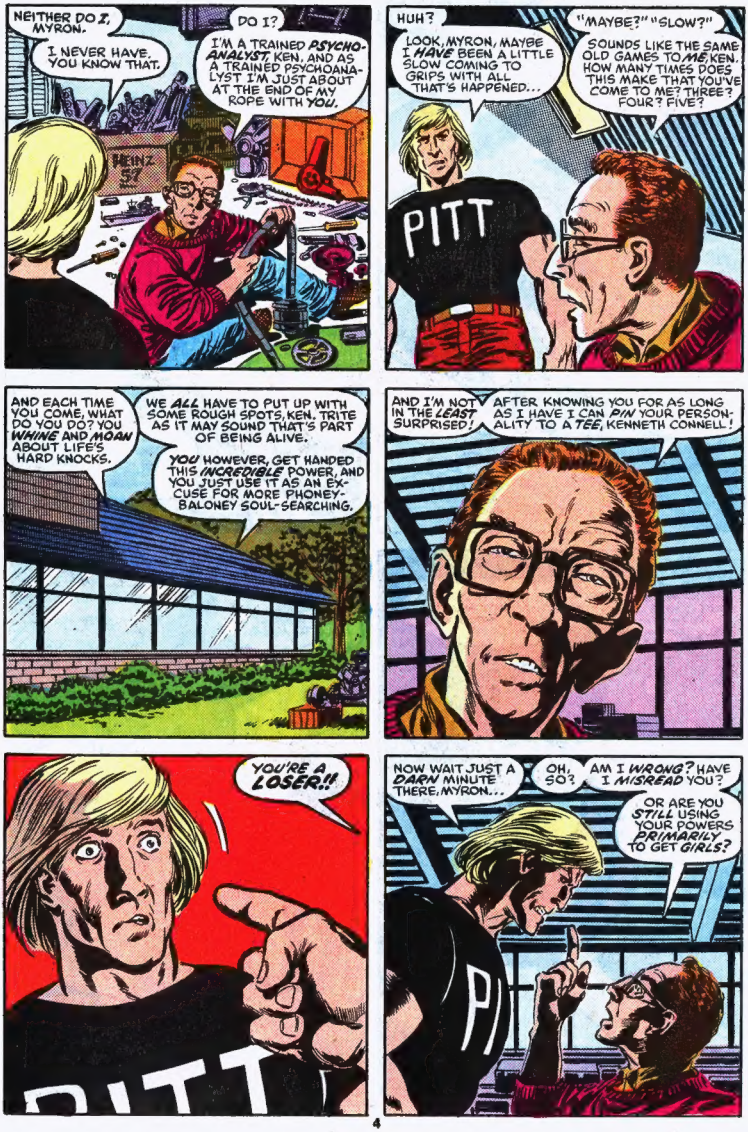
DUCK...
LEND ME FIFTY BUCKS, WOULD YOU?

HOW STRANGELY TURNS THE WORLD!
I'VE ALWAYS THOUGHT OL' DEBBIE THE DUCK DIDN'T HAVE MORE THAN HALF A HEMISPHERE OF BRAIN IN HER PRETTY LITTLE HEAD...
PITT
FIGURED THE MISSING MASS GOT DISPLACED TO ANOTHER PART OF HER BODY...

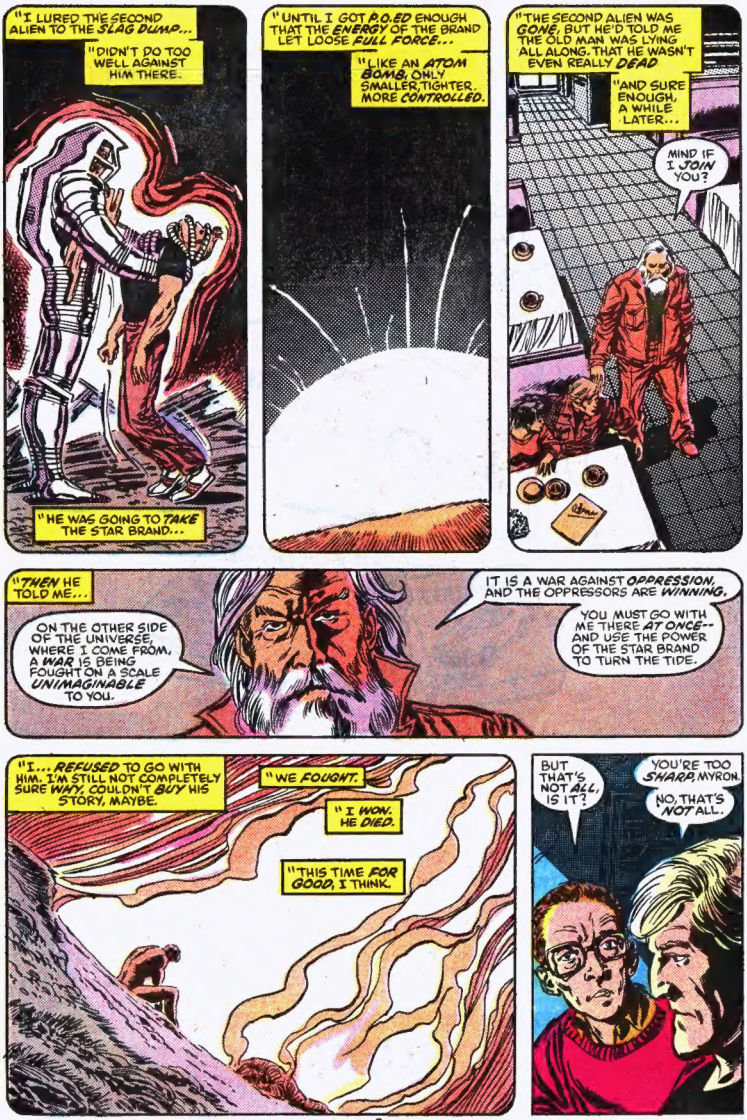

NOW SHE ALL OF A SUDDEN HITS ME WITH THIS DEEP PHILOSOPHICAL GUNK.
"BE A SUPER HERO. SAVE THE WORLD."
PITT
SAVE THE WHALES.
OKAY. SO MAYBE SHE'S GOT A POINT IN THERE, SOMEWHERE.

SINCE THE OLD MAN GAVE ME THE STAR BAND--AND ALL THE INFINITE POWER THAT COMES ALONG WITH IT--
I'VE BEEN TRYING TO FIGURE OUT EXACTLY WHAT I SHOULD DO WITH IT!

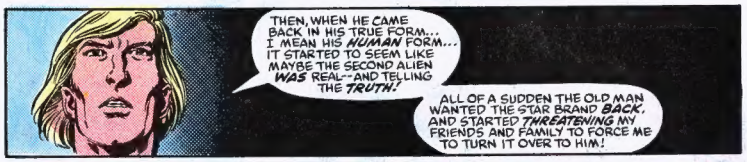
UNFORTUNATELY, I LET MY TEMPER GET IN THE WAY AND WALKED OUT ON THE ONE MAN WHO MIGHT REALLY BE ABLE TO HELP...
MYRON... GOT A MINUTE?
THAT DEPENDS.
I'M A BUSY MAN, KEN. I DON'T HAVE TIME FOR GAMES.
NOT ANY MORE.
PITT

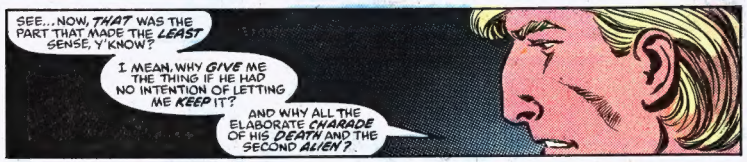

NEITHER DO I, MYRON.
I NEVER HAVE, YOU KNOW THAT.
DO I?
I'M A TRAINED PSYCHO-ANALYST, KEN, AND AS A TRAINED PSYCHOANALYST I'M JUST ABOUT AT THE END OF MY ROPE WITH YOU.
HEINZ 57
HUH?
LOOK, MYRON, MAYBE I HAVE BEEN A LITTLE SLOW COMING TO GRIPS WITH ALL THAT'S HAPPENED...
"MAYBE?" "SLOW?"
SOUNDS LIKE THE SAME OLD GAMES TO ME, KEN. HOW MANY TIMES DOES THIS MAKE THAT YOU'VE COME TO ME? THREE? FOUR? FIVE?
PITT
AND EACH TIME YOU COME, WHAT DO YOU DO? YOU WHINE AND MOAN ABOUT LIFE'S HARD KNOCKS.
WE ALL HAVE TO PUT UP WITH SOME ROUGH SPOTS, KEN. TRITE AS IT MAY SOUND THAT'S PART OF BEING ALIVE.
YOU HOWEVER, GET HANDED THIS INCREDIBLE POWER, AND YOU JUST USE IT AS AN EXCUSE FOR MORE PHONEY-BALONEY SOUL-SEARCHING.
AND I'M NOT IN THE LEAST SURPRISED!
AFTER KNOWING YOU FOR AS LONG AS I HAVE I CAN PIN YOUR PERSONALITY TO A TEE, KENNETH CONNELL!
YOU'RE A LOSER!!
NOW WAIT JUST A DARN MINUTE THERE, MYRON...
OH, SO?
AM I WRONG? HAVE I MISREAD YOU?
OR ARE YOU STILL USING YOUR POWERS PRIMARILY TO GET GIRLS?
PITT

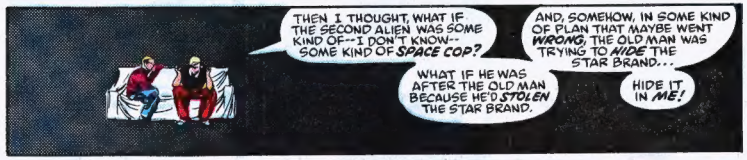
MYRON, I HAVEN'T...
I MEAN...
I HARDLY...
I MEAN...
MYRON... HELP ME...
PLEASE...
ALL RIGHT! THAT SOUNDS LIKE GENUINE CONTRITION.
GOOD! A POSITIVE START TO A SUCCESSFUL THERAPY.
AND DON'T START IN CALLING MY LIFE'S WORK "GUNK" AGAIN, OR I'LL KICK YOUR HYPERTHYROID BUTT OUT OF HERE!
NOW, SIT DOWN...
AND TELL IT TO ME AGAIN, FROM THE BEGINNING.
MYRON.
YOU'VE HEARD ALL THIS A HUNDRED TIMES!
SO? MAKE IT A HUNDRED ONE!
"ALL RIGHT...
"I MET THIS OLD MAN IN THE WOODS...
"HE GAVE ME THIS MOVABLE TATTOO HE CALLED THE 'STAR BRAND.'
JUST PUT YOUR HAND ON IT. I'LL DO THE REST.
"THEN HE DIED, AND I DISCOVERED HE WAS REALLY AN ALIEN...
"FROM OUTER SPACE!
"AND THE VERY NEXT NIGHT ANOTHER ALIEN ATTACKED, RIGHT HERE IN THIS HOUSE!!

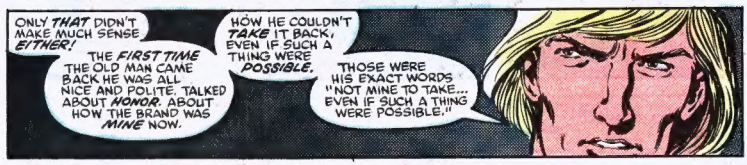

"I LURED THE SECOND ALIEN TO THE SLAG DUMP...
"DIDN'T DO TOO WELL AGAINST HIM THERE.
"HE WAS GOING TO TAKE THE STAR BRAND...
"UNTIL I GOT P.O.ED ENOUGH THAT THE ENERGY OF THE BRAND LET LOOSE FULL FORCE...
"LIKE AN ATOM BOMB, ONLY SMALLER, TIGHTER, MORE CONTROLLED.
"THE SECOND ALIEN WAS GONE, BUT HE'D TOLD ME THE OLD MAN WAS LYING ALL ALONG. THAT HE WASN'T EVEN REALLY DEAD
"AND SURE ENOUGH, A WHILE LATER...
MIND IF I JOIN YOU?
"THEN HE TOLD ME...
ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE UNIVERSE, WHERE I COME FROM, A WAR IS BEING FOUGHT ON A SCALE UNIMAGINABLE TO YOU.
IT IS A WAR AGAINST OPPRESSION, AND THE OPPRESSORS ARE WINNING.
YOU MUST GO WITH ME THERE AT ONCE-- AND USE THE POWER OF THE STAR BRAND TO TURN THE TIDE.
"I... REFUSED TO GO WITH HIM. I'M STILL NOT COMPLETELY SURE WHY. COULDN'T BUY HIS STORY, MAYBE.
"WE FOUGHT.
"I WON. HE DIED.
"THIS TIME FOR GOOD, I THINK.
BUT THAT'S NOT ALL, IS IT?
YOU'RE TOO SHARP, MYRON.
NO, THAT'S NOT ALL.

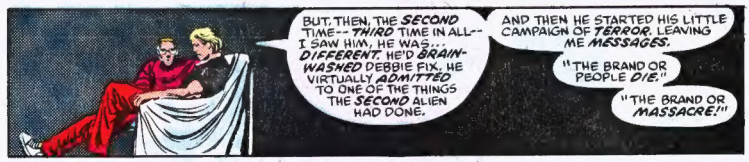
THE MORE I THOUGHT ABOUT ALL THE THINGS THAT HAD HAPPENED TO ME, THE MORE DARTS OF IT JUST DIDN'T RING TRUE.
I STARTED OUT BY WONDERING IF MAYBE THERE WAS NO SECOND ALIEN. MAYBE THAT WAS THE OLD MAN AGAIN. TESTING ME.
MAKING CERTAIN I WAS WORTHY.


THEN, WHEN HE CAME BACK IN HIS TRUE FORM... I MEAN HIS HUMAN FORM... IT STARTED TO SEEM LIKE MAYBE THE SECOND ALIEN WAS REAL--AND TELLING THE TRUTH!
ALL OF A SUDDEN THE OLD MAN WANTED THE STAR BRAND BACK. AND STARTED THREATENING MY FRIENDS AND FAMILY TO FORCE ME TO TURN IT OVER TO HIM!

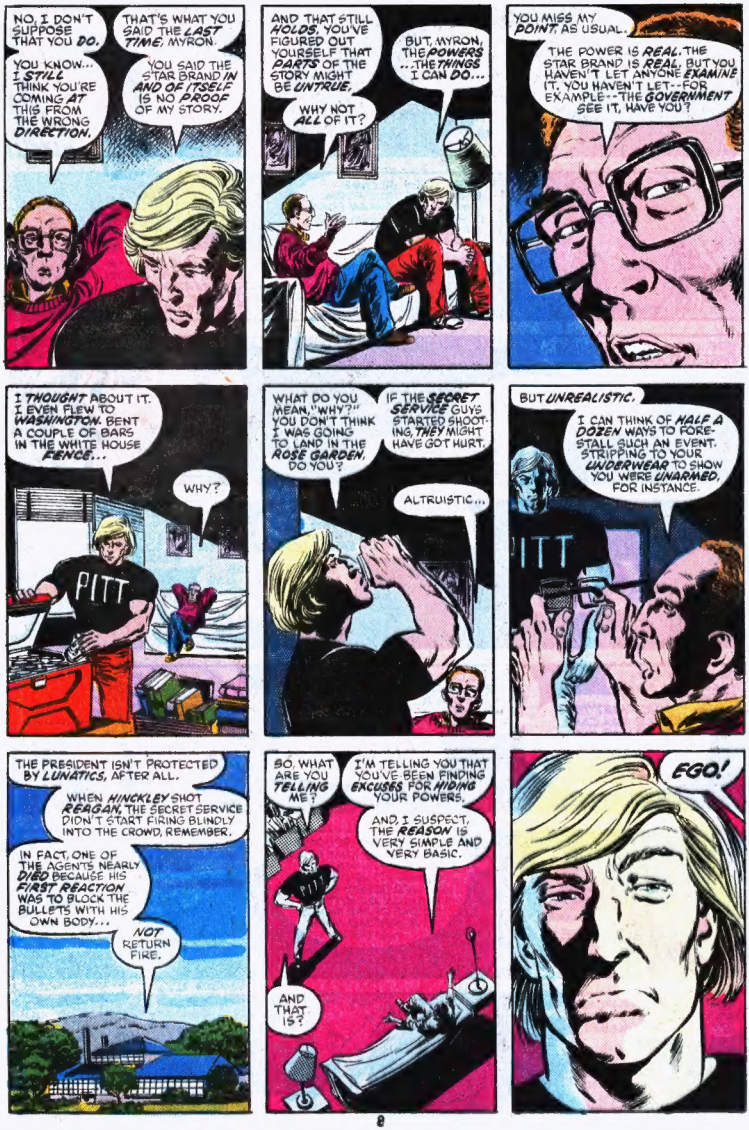

SEE... NOW, THAT WAS THE PART THAT MADE THE LEAST SENSE, Y'KNOW?
I MEAN, WHY GIVE ME THE THING IF HE HAD NO INTENTION OF LETTING ME KEEP IT?
AND WHY ALL THE ELABORATE CHARADE OF HIS DEATH AND THE SECOND ALIEN?

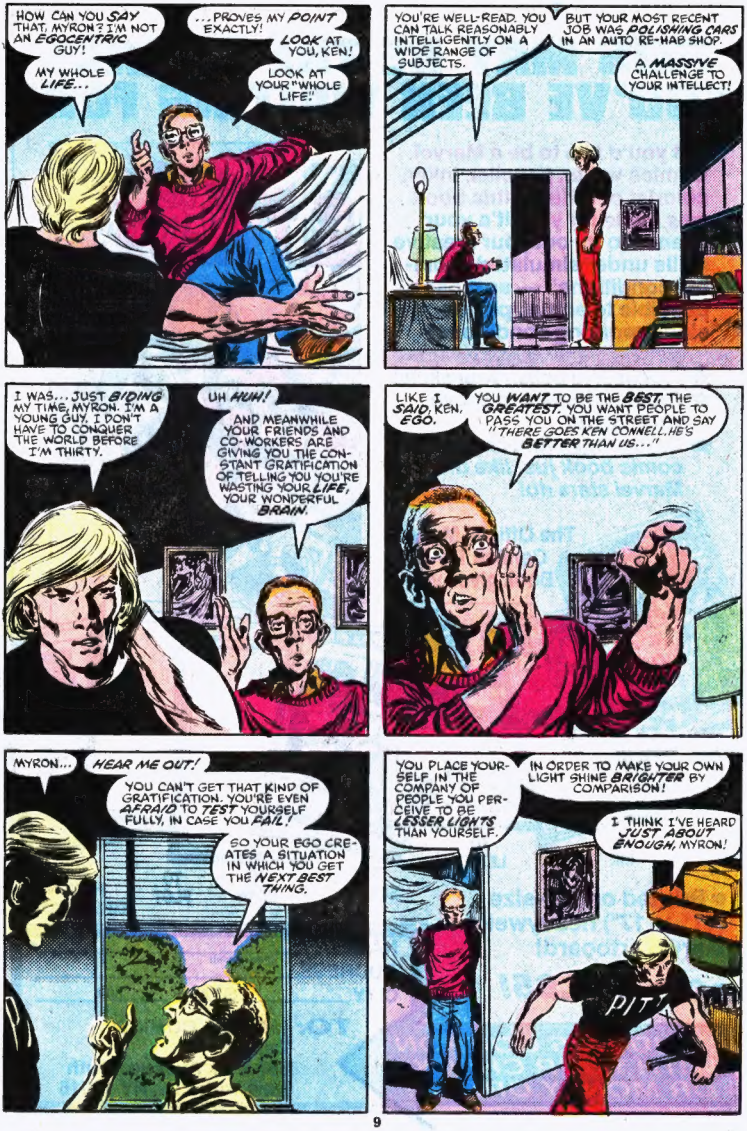

THEN I THOUGHT, WHAT IF THE SECOND ALIEN WAS SOME KIND OF--I DON'T KNOW--SOME KIND OF SPACE COP?
WHAT IF HE WAS AFTER THE OLD MAN BECAUSE HE'D STOLEN THE STAR BRAND.
AND, SOMEHOW, IN SOME KIND OF PLAN THAT MAYBE WENT WRONG, THE OLD MAN WAS TRYING TO HIDE THE STAR BRAND...
HIDE IT IN ME!


ONLY THAT DIDN'T MAKE MUCH SENSE EITHER!
THE FIRST TIME THE OLD MAN CAME BACK HE WAS ALL NICE AND POLITE. TALKED ABOUT HONOR. ABOUT HOW THE BRAND WAS MINE NOW.
HOW HE COULDN'T TAKE IT BACK, EVEN IF SUCH A THING WERE POSSIBLE.
THOSE WERE HIS EXACT WORDS "NOT MINE TO TAKE... EVEN IF SUCH A THING WERE POSSIBLE."

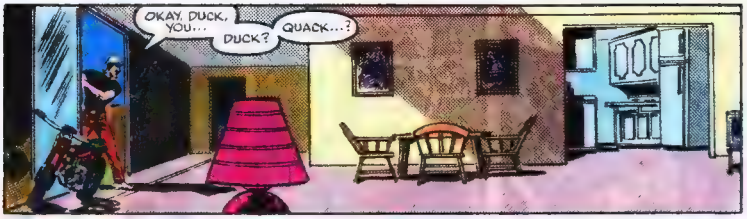

BUT, THEN, THE SECOND TIME--THIRD TIME IN ALL--I SAW HIM, HE WAS... DIFFERENT. HE'D BRAIN-WASHED DEBBIE FIX. HE VIRTUALLY ADMITTED TO ONE OF THE THINGS THE SECOND ALIEN HAD DONE.
AND THEN HE STARTED HIS LITTLE CAMPAIGN OF TERROR, LEAVING ME MESSAGES.
"THE BRAND OR PEOPLE DIE."
"THE BRAND OR MASSACRE!"

THAT ONE HE SCRATCHED INTO THE FRONT STEPS OF MY FOLKS' HOUSE!
MYRON...
I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO ANY MORE!!


NO, I DON'T SUPPOSE THAT YOU DO.
THAT'S WHAT YOU SAID THE LAST TIME, MYRON.
YOU KNOW... I STILL THINK YOU'RE COMING AT THIS FROM THE WRONG DIRECTION.
YOU SAID THE STAR BRAND IN AND OF ITSELF IS NO PROOF OF MY STORY.
AND THAT STILL HOLDS. YOU'VE FIGURED OUT YOURSELF THAT PARTS OF THE STORY MIGHT BE UNTRUE.
BUT, MYRON, THE POWERS ... THE THINGS I CAN DO...
WHY NOT ALL OF IT?
YOU MISS MY POINT, AS USUAL.
THE POWER IS REAL. THE STAR BRAND IS REAL. BUT YOU HAVEN'T LET ANYONE EXAMINE IT. YOU HAVEN'T LET--FOR EXAMPLE--THE GOVERNMENT SEE IT, HAVE YOU?
I THOUGHT ABOUT IT. I EVEN FLEW TO WASHINGTON. BENT A COUPLE OF BARS IN THE WHITE HOUSE FENCE...
WHY?
PITT
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "WHY?" YOU DON'T THINK I WAS GOING TO LAND IN THE ROSE GARDEN, DO YOU?
IF THE SECRET SERVICE GUYS STARTED SHOOTING, THEY MIGHT HAVE GOT HURT.
ALTRUISTIC...
BUT UNREALISTIC.
I CAN THINK OF HALF A DOZEN WAYS TO FORESTALL SUCH AN EVENT. STRIPPING TO YOUR UNDERWEAR TO SHOW YOU WERE UNARMED, FOR INSTANCE.
PITT
THE PRESIDENT ISN'T PROTECTED BY LUNATICS, AFTER ALL.
WHEN HINCKLEY SHOT REAGAN, THE SECRET SERVICE DIDN'T START FIRING BLINDLY INTO THE CROWD, REMEMBER.
IN FACT, ONE OF THE AGENTS NEARLY DIED BECAUSE HIS FIRST REACTION WAS TO BLOCK THE BULLETS WITH HIS OWN BODY...
NOT RETURN FIRE.
SO, WHAT ARE YOU TELLING ME?
I'M TELLING YOU THAT YOU'VE BEEN FINDING EXCUSES FOR HIDING YOUR POWERS.
AND, I SUSPECT, THE REASON IS VERY SIMPLE AND VERY BASIC.
AND THAT IS?
PITT
EGO!


HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT, MYRON? I'M NOT AN EGOCENTRIC GUY!
...PROVES MY POINT EXACTLY!
LOOK AT YOU, KEN!
MY WHOLE LIFE...
LOOK AT YOUR "WHOLE LIFE!"
YOU'RE WELL-READ. YOU CAN TALK REASONABLY INTELLIGENTLY ON A WIDE RANGE OF SUBJECTS.
BUT YOUR MOST RECENT JOB WAS POLISHING CARS IN AN AUTO RE-HAB SHOP.
A MASSIVE CHALLENGE TO YOUR INTELLECT!
I WAS... JUST BIDING MY TIME, MYRON. I'M A YOUNG GUY. I DON'T HAVE TO CONQUER THE WORLD BEFORE I'M THIRTY.
UH HUH!
AND MEANWHILE YOUR FRIENDS AND CO-WORKERS ARE GIVING YOU THE CONSTANT GRATIFICATION OF TELLING YOU YOU'RE WASTING YOUR LIFE, YOUR WONDERFUL BRAIN.
LIKE I SAID, KEN, EGO.
YOU WANT TO BE THE BEST, THE GREATEST. YOU WANT PEOPLE TO PASS YOU ON THE STREET AND SAY "THERE GOES KEN CONNELL. HE'S BETTER THAN US..."
MYRON...
HEAR ME OUT!
YOU CAN'T GET THAT KIND OF GRATIFICATION. YOU'RE EVEN AFRAID TO TEST YOURSELF FULLY, IN CASE YOU FAIL!
SO YOUR EGO CREATES A SITUATION IN WHICH YOU GET THE NEXT BEST THING.
YOU PLACE YOURSELF IN THE COMPANY OF PEOPLE YOU PERCEIVE TO BE LESSER LIGHTS THAN YOURSELF.
IN ORDER TO MAKE YOUR OWN LIGHT SHINE BRIGHTER BY COMPARISON!
I THINK I'VE HEARD JUST ABOUT ENOUGH, MYRON!
PIT!

NO, I THINK YOU'VE HEARD TOO MUCH!
YOU CAME HERE EXPECTING TO GET THE SAME OL' SONG FROM YOUR PAL MYRON.
"YOU'RE WASTING YOUR LIFE, KEN."
"YOU'RE SO SMART. YOU COULD DO ANYTHING, KEN."
WELL, NOT THIS TIME!
WHATEVER ELSE THE STAR BRAND MAY HAVE DONE TO YOUR LIFE, IT'S TAKEN AWAY THAT LITTLE GAME--FOREVER!
YOU REALLY DO HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO BE BETTER THAN THE REST OF US NOW, KEN.
STOP HIDING YOUR LIGHT UNDER A BUSHEL BASKET!
STOP SNEAKING AROUND, PLAYING WITH YOUR POWER.
PITT
FACE YOUR NEW REALITY HEAD ON, KEN CONNELL.
LET THE WORLD KNOW THERE'S AN HONEST-TO-GOD SUPERHERO IN THEIR MIDST!
I...I GOTTA THINK ABOUT THIS, MYRON.
BUT...
YOU KNOW, THAT'S JUST WHAT THE DUCK SAID!
PITT
I KNOW...
HEAVY!
WHO'D EVER HAVE EXPECTED DEBBIE FIX AND MYRON FELDMAN TO BE RUNNING ON THE SAME WAVELENGTH!
THAT'S LIKE FINDING OUT ALBERT EINSTEIN AND MARILYN MONROE BELONGED TO THE SAME CHAPTER OF MENSA.


OKAY, DUCK, YOU...
DUCK?
QUACK...?

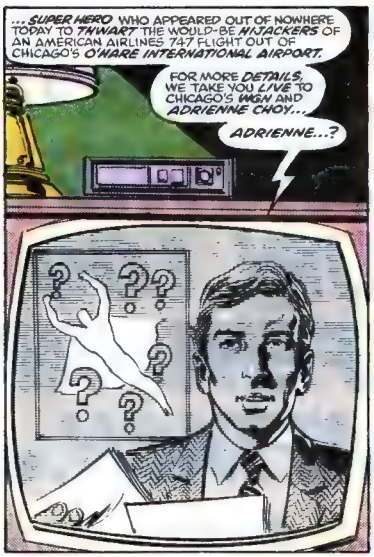
ROOOSH!
...TOILET...

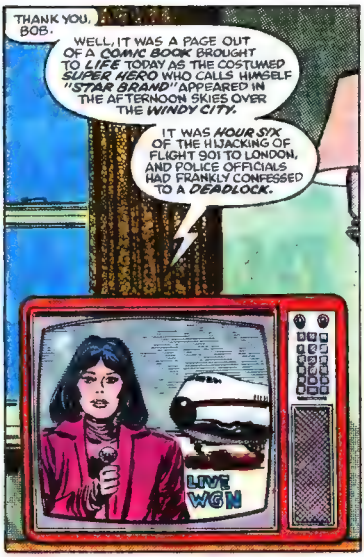
DUCK...
OH, HI, KENNY.
SORRY I WASN'T OUT WHEN YA GOT BACK.
I WAS...
WELL, I KINDA THREW UP...

SO I NOTICE.
THERE'S SOME LISTERINE IN THE MEDICINE CABINET...
OH... SORRY, KENNY.
WHAT DID MYRON SAY?

OH...ER... PRETTY MUCH WHAT I EXPECTED.
AS I WAS FLYING OVER THERE I DECIDED YOU WERE RIGHT. MYRON JUST CONFIRMED IT FOR ME.
I WAS... RIGHT?
GURGGLGGLE...
OH, KENNY. GLUG, YOU MEAN...?

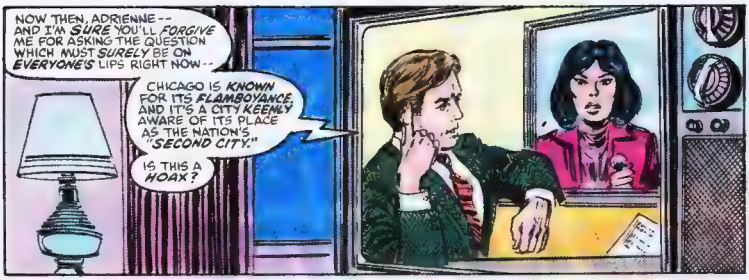
YUP.
I'M GONNA BE A REAL, LIVE...


...SUPER HERO WHO APPEARED OUT OF NOWHERE TODAY TO THWART THE WOULD-BE HIJACKERS OF AN AMERICAN AIRLINES 747 FLIGHT OUT OF CHICAGO'S O'HARE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT.
FOR MORE DETAILS, WE TAKE YOU LIVE TO CHICAGO'S WGN AND ADRIENNE CHOY...
ADRIENNE...?

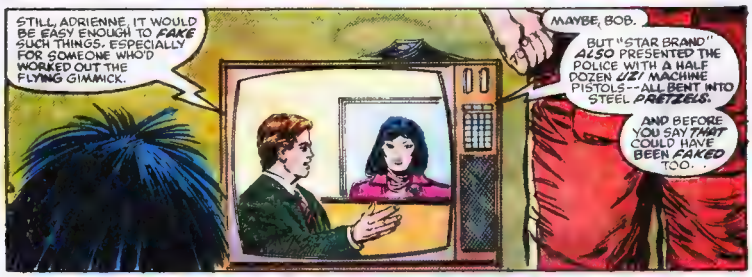

THANK YOU, BOB.
WELL, IT WAS A PAGE OUT OF A COMIC BOOK BROUGHT TO LIFE TODAY AS THE COSTUMED SUPER HERO WHO CALLS HIMSELF "STAR BRAND" APPEARED IN THE AFTERNOON SKIES OVER THE WINDY CITY.
IT WAS HOUR SIX OF THE HIJACKING OF FLIGHT 901 TO LONDON, AND POLICE OFFICIALS HAD FRANKLY CONFESSED TO A DEADLOCK.
LIVE WGN

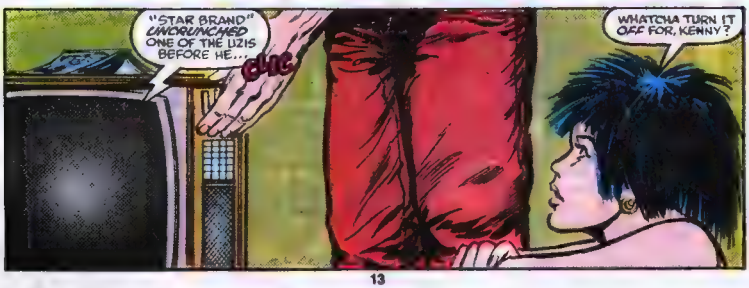
ABRUPTLY, OUT OF THE EASTERN SKY, RADAR PICKED UP A TINY "ANGEL" APPROACHING THE AIRPORT
"ANGEL" IS TRAFFIC-CONTROLLER TALK FOR AN UNIDENTIFIED TARGET, BOB.
AND, WHEN THE TELEPHOTO CAMERA LENSES WERE TURNED IN THAT DIRECTION, THIS IS WHAT THEY SAW!
SONY

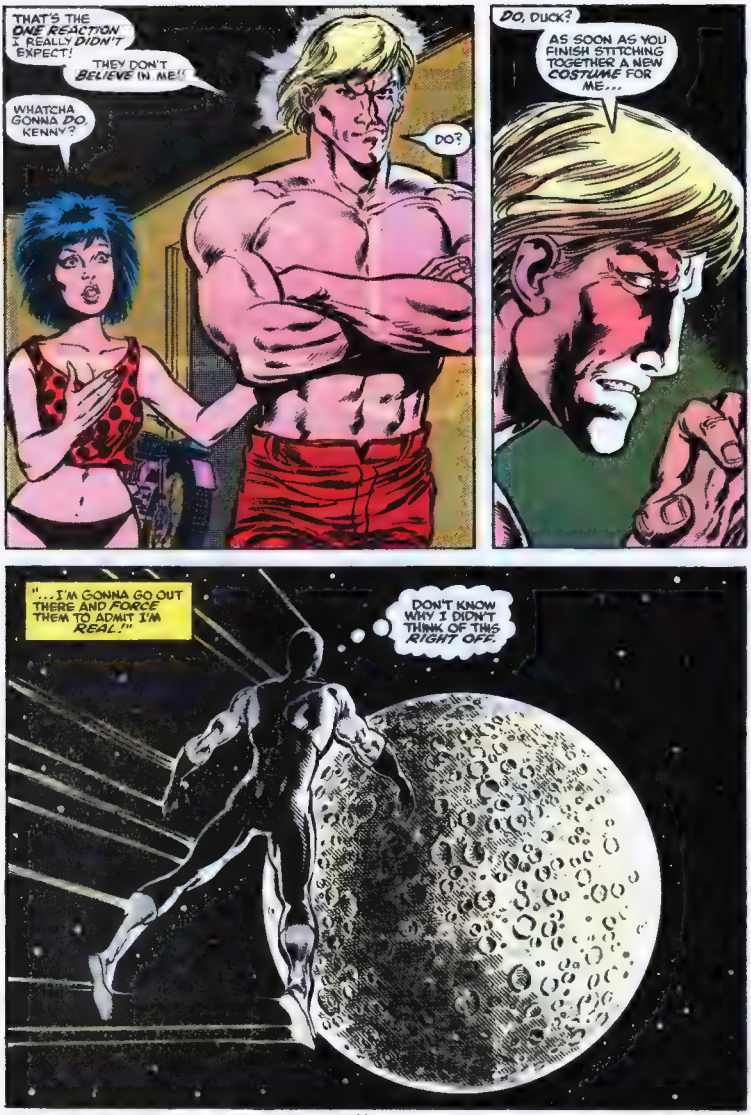
A FLYING MAN, ESTIMATED TO BE WELL OVER SIX FEET TALL, AND WEIGHING TWO HUNDRED AND FORTY POUNDS.
HE LANDED ATOP THE 747 AND PROCEEDED TO RIP OPEN THE ROOF AS IF HE WERE OPENING A SARDINE CAN!

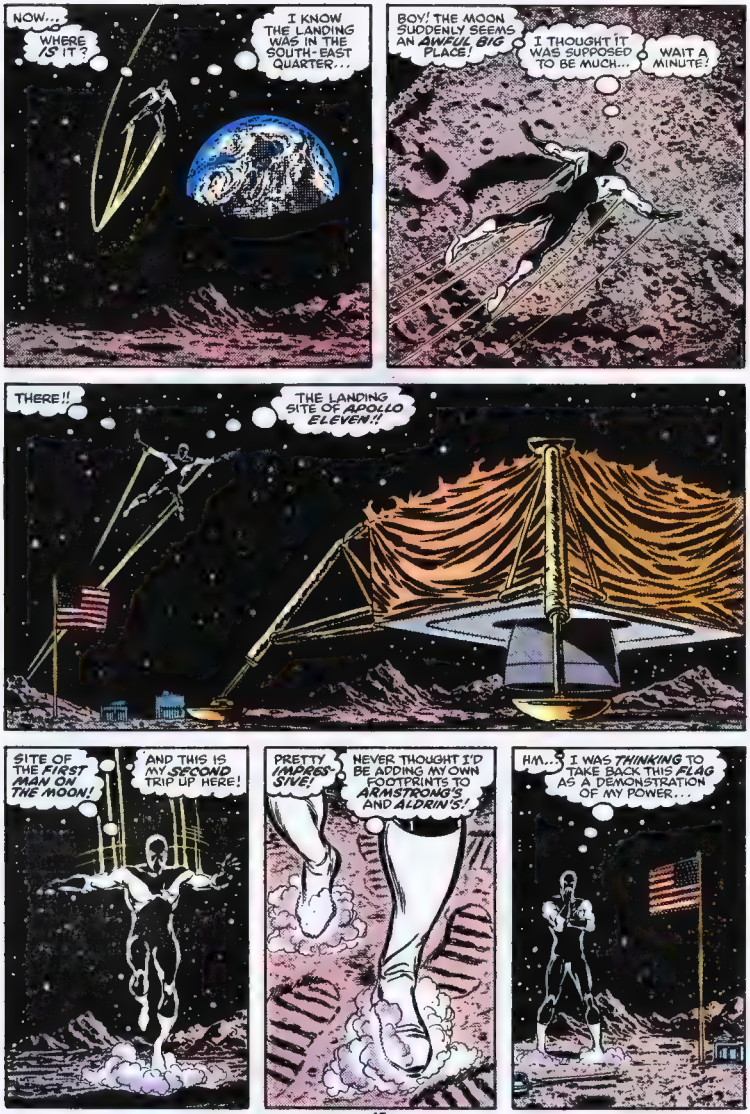

NOW THEN, ADRIENNE--AND I'M *SURE* YOU'LL *FORGIVE* ME FOR ASKING THE QUESTION WHICH MUST *SURELY* BE ON *EVERYONE'S* LIPS RIGHT NOW--
CHICAGO IS *KNOWN* FOR ITS *FLAMBOYANCE*, AND IT'S A CITY *KEENLY* AWARE OF ITS PLACE AS THE NATION'S *"SECOND CITY."*
IS THIS A *HOAX*?

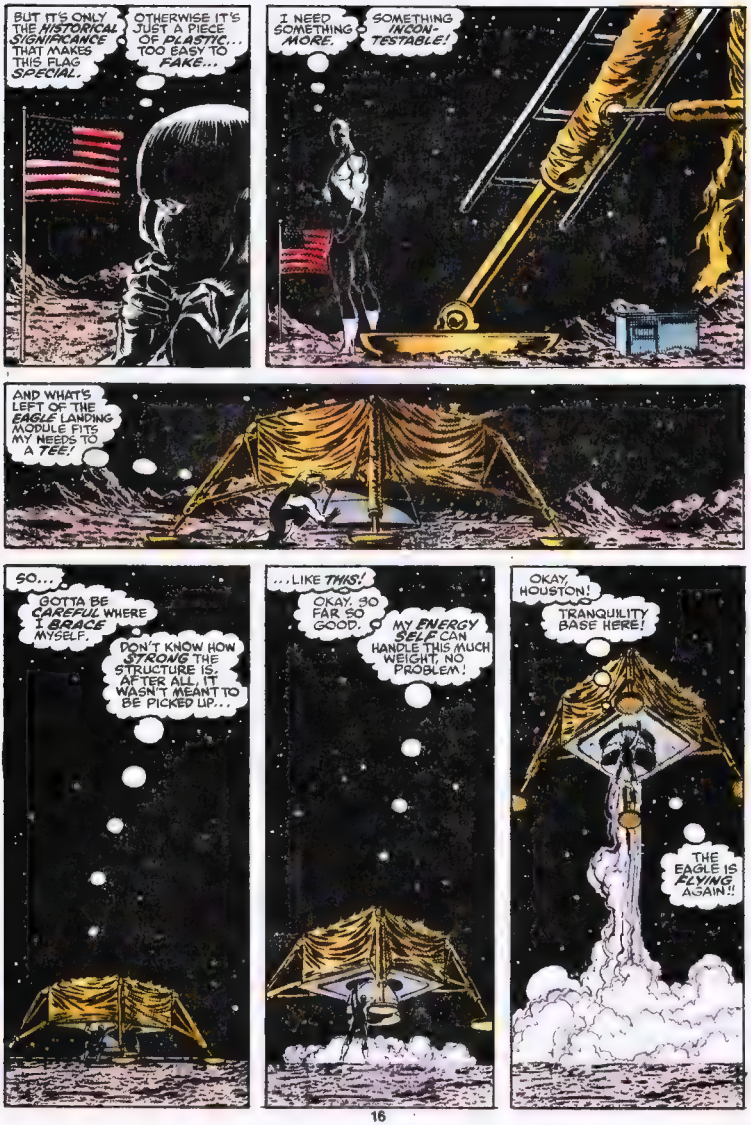
BOB, I WAS *THERE*, WHEN "STAR BRAND" DROPPED OUT OF THE SKY. I SAW NO *WIRES*, AND THE TIGHTNESS OF HIS COSTUME ELIMINATES ANY KIND OF HIDDEN "FLYING BELT."
I WAS ALSO THERE WHEN HE TURNED HIS PRISONERS OVER TO THE POLICE. THERE WERE *STILL-SMOLDERING BULLET HOLES* IN HIS COSTUME...
BUT *NOT* IN *HIM!*
LIVE WGN


STILL, ADRIENNE, IT WOULD BE EASY ENOUGH TO *FAKE* SUCH THINGS. ESPECIALLY FOR SOMEONE WHO'D *WORKED* OUT THE FLYING GIMMICK.
MAYBE, BOB.
BUT "STAR BRAND" *ALSO* PRESENTED THE POLICE WITH A HALF DOZEN *UZI* MACHINE PISTOLS--ALL BENT INTO STEEL *PRETZELS*.
AND BEFORE YOU SAY *THAT* COULD HAVE BEEN *FAKED* TOO...

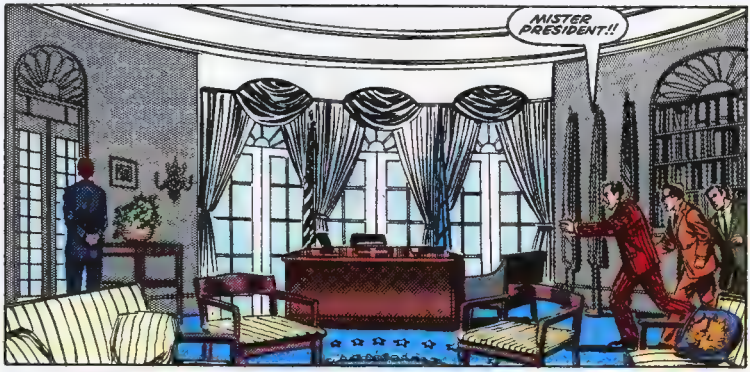

"STAR BRAND" *UNSLUNGHED* ONE OF THE UZIS BEFORE HE...
CLIC
WHATCHA TURN IT *OFF* FOR, KENNY?


THAT'S THE ONE REACTION I REALLY DIDN'T EXPECT!
THEY DON'T BELIEVE IN ME!!
WHATCHA GONNA DO, KENNY?
DO?
DO, DUCK?
AS SOON AS YOU FINISH STITCHING TOGETHER A NEW COSTUME FOR ME...
"...I'M GONNA GO OUT THERE AND FORCE THEM TO ADMIT I'M REAL!"
DON'T KNOW WHY I DIDN'T THINK OF THIS RIGHT OFF.


NOW...
WHERE IS IT?
I KNOW THE LANDING WAS IN THE SOUTH-EAST QUARTER...
BOY! THE MOON SUDDENLY SEEMS AN AWFUL BIG PLACE!
I THOUGHT IT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE MUCH...
WAIT A MINUTE!
THERE!!
THE LANDING SITE OF APOLLO ELEVEN!!
SITE OF THE FIRST MAN ON THE MOON!
AND THIS IS MY SECOND TRIP UP HERE!
PRETTY IMPRESSIVE!
NEVER THOUGHT I'D BE ADDING MY OWN FOOTPRINTS TO ARMSTRONG'S AND ALDRIN'S!
HM...
I WAS THINKING TO TAKE BACK THIS FLAG AS A DEMONSTRATION OF MY POWER...

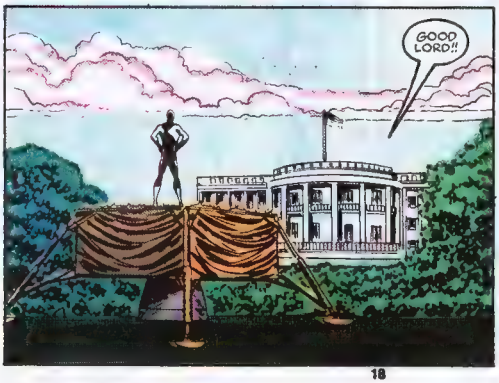

BUT IT'S ONLY THE HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE THAT MAKES THIS FLAG SPECIAL.
OTHERWISE IT'S JUST A PIECE OF PLASTIC... TOO EASY TO FAKE...
I NEED SOMETHING MORE.
SOMETHING INCONTESTABLE!
AND WHAT'S LEFT OF THE EAGLE LANDING MODULE FITS MY NEEDS TO A TEE!
SO...
GOTTA BE CAREFUL WHERE I BRACE MYSELF.
DON'T KNOW HOW STRONG THE STRUCTURE IS. AFTER ALL, IT WASN'T MEANT TO BE PICKED UP...
...LIKE THIS!
OKAY, SO FAR SO GOOD.
MY ENERGY SELF CAN HANDLE THIS MUCH WEIGHT, NO PROBLEM!
OKAY, HOUSTON! TRANQUILITY BASE HERE!
THE EAGLE IS FLYING AGAIN!!

NOW...
GOTTA BE REAL CAREFUL MAKING MY RE-ENTRY.
THE LUNAR MODULE WASN'T BUILT TO FLY IN ATMOSPHERE.
IF I COME DOWN TOO FAST IT COULD BURN UP OR RIP APART!
GOOD... GOOD...
THE WINDS UP HERE ARE BUFFETING ME PRETTY BAD...
BUT AS LONG AS I RIDE WITH 'EM, THERE'S NO CHANCE OF ME DROPPING THE EAGLE.
AND AT THIS ALTITUDE, I DON'T NEED A MAP TO TELL ME WHERE I'M GOING.
I JUST FOLLOW THE EASTERN SEABOARD UNTIL I FIND...
WASHINGTON, D.C.!!

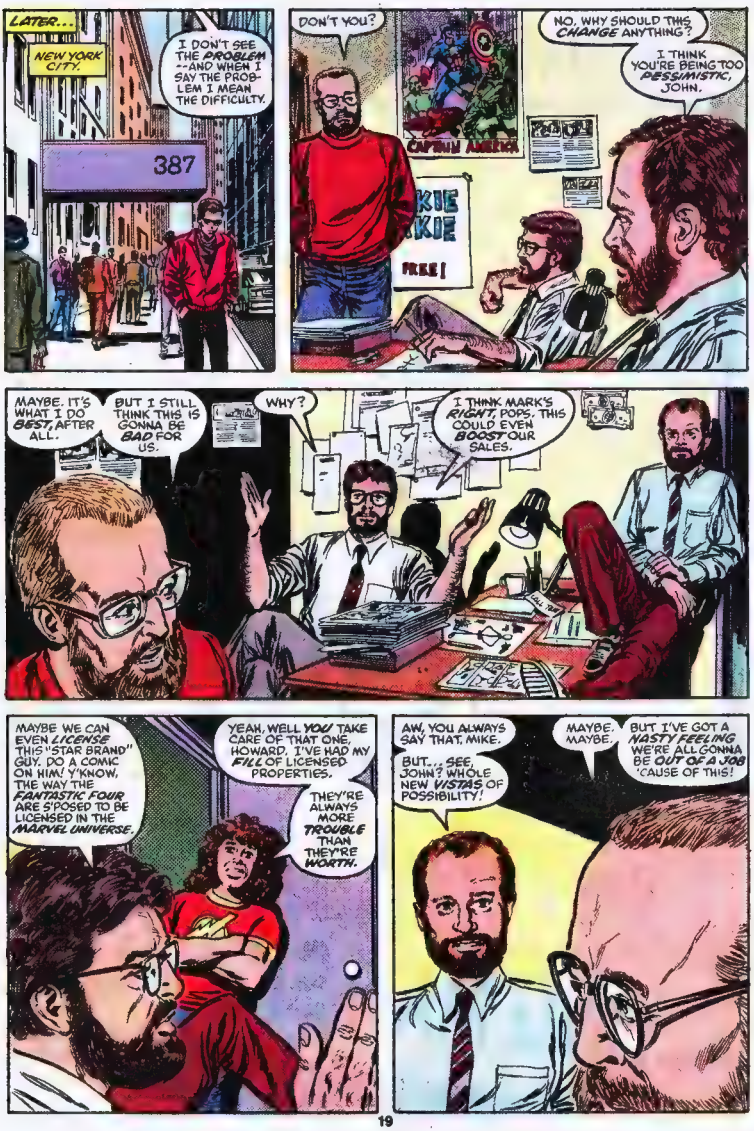

MISTER PRESIDENT!!

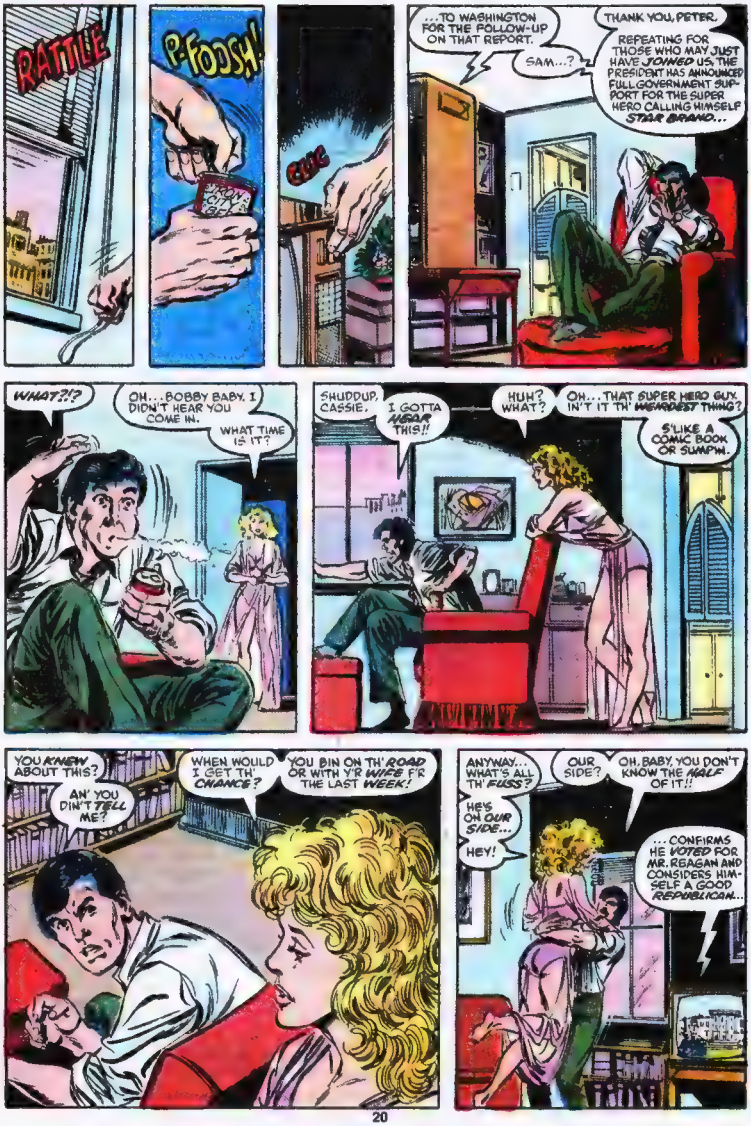
SIR!
GET AWAY FROM THE WINDOWS!
WHAT IN...??

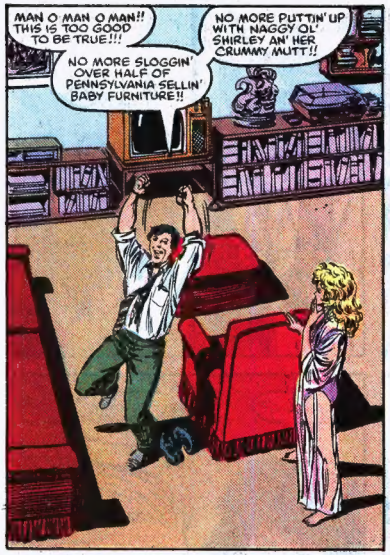
MANDRAKE... WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS?
S-SOMETHING GOING ON, MR. PRESIDENT. SOMETHING BIG!
SOMETHING THAT ISN'T COVERED BY MY SECRET SERVICE TRAINING!


GOOD LORD!!

IT'S HIM!!
IT'S THAT SUPERHERO I SAW ON THE NEWS THIS MORNING!!

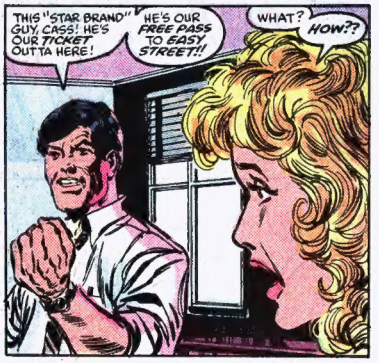

LATER...
NEW YORK CITY.
387
I DON'T SEE THE PROBLEM --AND WHEN I SAY THE PROBLEM I MEAN THE DIFFICULTY.
DON'T YOU?
CAPTAIN AMERICA
KIE KIE
FREE!
NO, WHY SHOULD THIS CHANGE ANYTHING?
I THINK YOU'RE BEING TOO PESSIMISTIC, JOHN.
MAYBE. IT'S WHAT I DO BEST, AFTER ALL..
BUT I STILL THINK THIS IS GONNA BE BAD FOR US.
WHY?
I THINK MARK'S RIGHT, POPS. THIS COULD EVEN BOOST OUR SALES.
MAYBE WE CAN EVEN LICENSE THIS "STAR BRAND" GUY. DO A COMIC ON HIM, Y'KNOW, THE WAY THE FANTASTIC FOUR ARE S'POSED TO BE LICENSED IN THE MARVEL UNIVERSE.
YEAH, WELL YOU TAKE CARE OF THAT ONE, HOWARD. I'VE HAD MY FILL OF LICENSED PROPERTIES.
THEY'RE ALWAYS MORE TROUBLE THAN THEY'RE WORTH.
AW, YOU ALWAYS SAY THAT, MIKE.
BUT... SEE, JOHN? WHOLE NEW VISTAS OF POSSIBILITY!
MAYBE. MAYBE.
BUT I'VE GOT A NASTY FEELING WE'RE ALL GONNA BE OUT OF A JOB 'CAUSE OF THIS!


RATTLE
P-FOOSH!
CLUNK
...TO WASHINGTON FOR THE FOLLOW-UP ON THAT REPORT.
SAM...?
THANK YOU, PETER. REPEATING FOR THOSE WHO MAY JUST HAVE JOINED US, THE PRESIDENT HAS ANNOUNCED FULL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR THE SUPER HERO CALLING HIMSELF STAR BRAND...
WHAT?!?
OH...BOBBY BABY, I DIDN'T HEAR YOU COME IN.
WHAT TIME IS IT?
SHUDDUP, CASSIE.
I GOTTA HEAR THIS!!
HUH? WHAT?
OH...THAT SUPER HERO GUY, IN'T IT TH' WEIRDEST THING?
S'LIKE A COMIC BOOK OR SUMP'N.
YOU KNEW ABOUT THIS?
AN' YOU DIN'T TELL ME?
WHEN WOULD I GET TH' CHANCE?
YOU BIN ON TH' ROAD OR WITH Y'R WIFE FR THE LAST WEEK!
ANYWAY... WHAT'S ALL TH' FUSS?
OUR SIDE?
OH, BABY, YOU DON'T KNOW THE HALF OF IT!!
HE'S ON OUR SIDE...
HEY!
...CONFIRMS HE VOTED FOR MR. REAGAN AND CONSIDERS HIMSELF A GOOD REPUBLICAN...

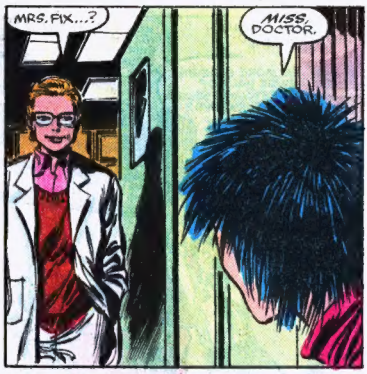

MAN O MAN O MAN!! THIS IS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE!!!
NO MORE PUTTIN' UP WITH NAGGY OL' SHIRLEY AN' HER CRUMMY MUTT!!
NO MORE SLOGGIN' OVER HALF OF PENNSYLVANIA SELLIN' BABY FURNITURE!!

WE GOT TH' WHOLE WORLD F'R OUR OYSTER, KIDDO!
WHADAYA WANT? LONDON? ROME? PARIS?
A WHOLE COUNTRY, MAYBE?
BOBBY...
STOP, YOU'RE SCARIN' ME...

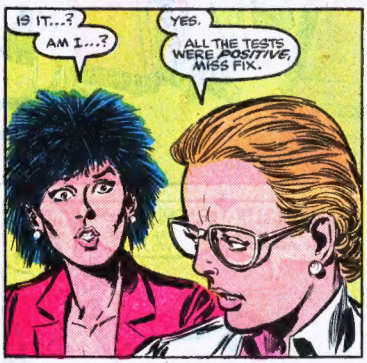
HEY, NOTHIN' TO BE AFRAID OF, BABES! NOTHIN' T'BE AFRAID OF EVER AGAIN!!
NO MORE DUMB JOB T'WORRY ABOUT. NO MORE BILLS T'PAY!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKIN' ABOUT, BOBBY?

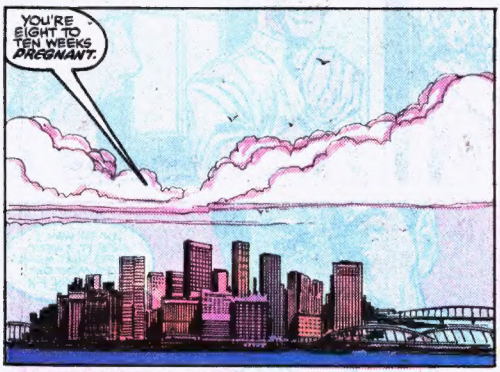

THIS "STAR BRAND" GUY, CASS! HE'S OUR TICKET OUTTA HERE!
HE'S OUR FREE PASS TO EASY STREET!!
WHAT?
HOW??

DON'TCHA SEE, CASSIE?
HE WEARS THAT MASK T'HIDE HIS REAL IDENTITY.
BUT I KNOW WHO HE REALLY IS!!
AN' TH' WAY I SEE IT, SWEET CHEEKS, THAT MEANS FROM NOW ON HE'S WORKIN' F'R ME!!



OH...
I SEE. I GUESS THAT EXPLAINS WHY YOU DIDN'T GO TO YOUR REGULAR GYNECOLOGIST.
I WAS ABOUT TO OFFER CONGRATULATIONS.
BUT NOW I'M NOT SO SURE...





NEXT ISSUE:

THE SINGLE MOST DRAMATIC OCCURRENCE SINCE THE WHITE EVENT!!

BE HERE IN SIXTY DAYS FOR...

FAREWELL, PITTSBURGH!

universe news

Pro File on: PAUL RYAN

Marvel freelance credits (past): *THING #27, 28; IRON MAN #202; SQUADRON SUPREME #6,9,10,11,12; ETERNALS (MINI) #12; D.P.7, NIGHTMASK #3, KICKERS #5, SPIDERMAN ANNUAL (WEDDING).*

Marvel freelance credits (present): *D.P.7, SOLO AVENGERS (Black Knight), and the THOR Graphic Novel.*

My hobbies are: *Archery, knife throwing, fencing, horse-back riding, music, and weight lifting.*

The single work of which I am most proud is: *My son Jason and my daughter Heather.*

My pet peeves are: *Boom boxes. People who insist on forcing their musical tastes on the general public at a decible level just this side of shattering glass. General rudeness and littering.*

My place of birth is: *Somerville, Massachusetts.*

My greatest accomplishment outside the comics field is: *Getting into the comics field.*

My oddest habit is: *Drawing comic books.*

If they were making a movie of my life, I'd like to see my part played by: *Mark Harmon.*

The reason I got into comics was: *There wasn't anything else. I really wanted to do in life.*

People who knew me in high school thought I was: *A nerd.*

My favorite performers are: *Jane Oliver and Neil Diamond.*

The last good book I read was: *WITCHES OF EASTWICK.*

The last good movie I saw was: *HARRY AND THE HENDERSONS.*

The biggest influences on my work include: *Hal Foster, Curt Swan, John Buscema, Jack Kirby and Neil Adams.*

My greatest unfulfilled ambition in the comics field is: *To write, pencil and ink a complete book on my own.*

The worst part of my job is: *Trying to condense over-plotted stories.*

When nobody's looking I like to: *Sorry, guys, but that info could get me deported! (And I was born here.)*

The one thing I really want the world to know about me is: *Where to send any gifts or negotiable contributions.*

ITEM: At last we have a winner! Yes, out of the countless thousands of entries to our New Universe Slogan Contest announced in these pages five months ago, we've finally found one that hits us right smack where we live (in the New Universe, of course)! Sent to us by *Ernest Pascua* of Hilo, Hawaii, the Official Slogan of the New Universe is. . .(drum roll please). . . NUKE ME WITH THE NEW! Is that a real world battlecry or what? Congratulations, Ernest, you have just won one-year subscriptions to all four New Universe books. (Hey, we know we only promised the winner one, but what the hey!) Our deepest thanks to all you other New Uniphiles who sent suggestions. So, until everyone becomes paranormal, NUKE ME WITH THE NEW!

ITEM: Some of you may be wondering why we're running our Slogan Winner announcement this month when we promised it for last. Well, ahem, it's like this: we just plain ran out of space last time after Pro Filing jaunty *Joanne Spaldo* and all

NEW UNIVERSE CHECKLIST

☐ PSI-FORCE #15

☐ D.P.7 #15

☐ STARBRAND #11

☐ JUSTICE #15

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Final Edition

25 CENTS

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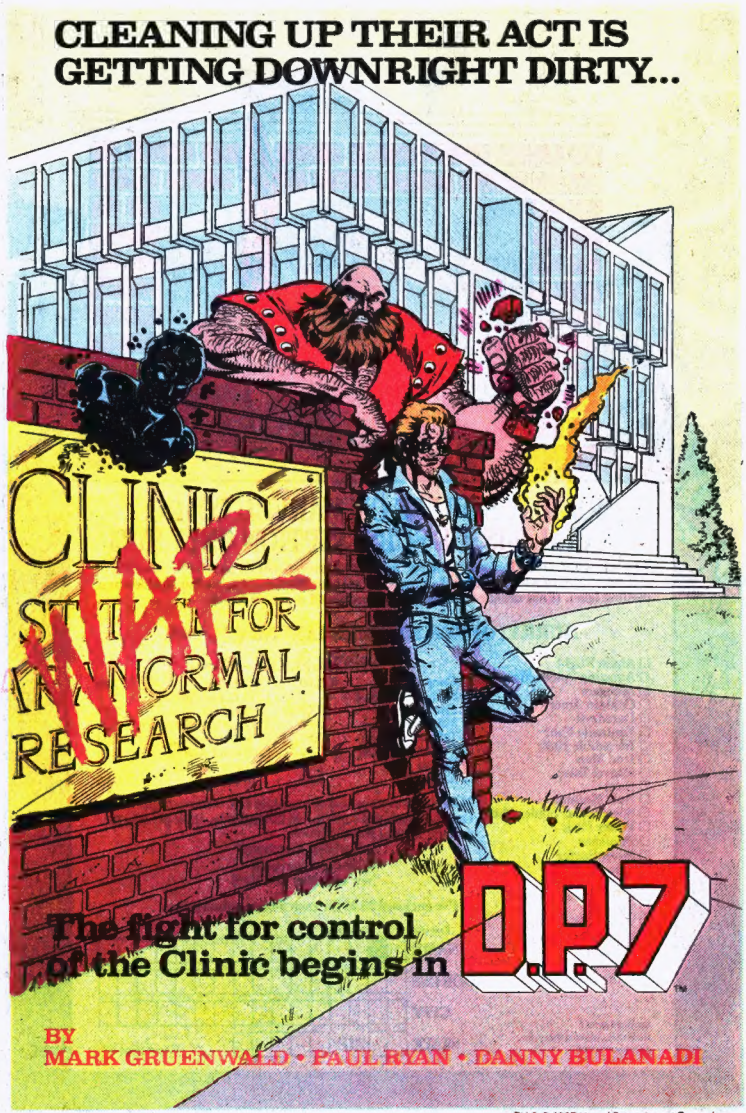
VOL. 60—NO. 303

FLYING MAN SIGHTED

HUNDREDS OF CITIZENS PUZZLED BY UNEXPLAINED PHENOMENON

Today



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